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Canada

Agricultural Situation

Ag Ministers Work Towards Formal Agreement on New Agricultural Policy Framework 2002

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Report Highlights:

Canada's federal, provincial and territorial agriculture ministers made progress in Ottawa, May 6-7, toward signing an umbrella agreement on the proposed Agricultural Policy Framework (APF) for their annual meeting next month in Halifax. The APF has five key elements: (1) business risk management; (2) food safety and quality; (3) environment; (4) sector renewal; (5) science and innovation. An agreement next June would allow governments, in partnership with producers and other industry stakeholders, to continue with detailed discussion on the specific programs that will make up the framework.

Includes PSD changes: No
Includes Trade Matrix: No
Unscheduled Report
Ottawa [CA1], CA

AGRICULTURE MINISTERS WORK TOWARD FORMAL AGREEMENT ON NEW AGRICULTURE POLICY FRAMEWORK

In a Federal-Provincial-Territorial communiqué released May 7, 2002, Canada's agriculture ministers made progress toward signing an umbrella agreement on the proposed Agricultural Policy Framework next month at their annual meeting in Halifax following meetings held in Ottawa, May 6-7.

Federal, provincial and territorial ministers met to confirm the direction of the proposed framework and review input from recently completed stakeholder consultations. Agreement in June would allow governments, in partnership with producers and other industry stakeholders, to continue with detailed discussion on the specific programs that will make up the framework.

Ministers discussed the results of the consultations and the valuable input that was provided. Ministers agreed the feedback received confirms they are on the right track. Ministers recognized there is still important work to be done to answer remaining questions before agreement can be reached, and further input from producers and other agri-food industry stakeholders on specific details of the framework is needed. Accordingly, Ministers announced further dialogue will begin shortly, providing more detail and analysis on the work undertaken to date, and outlining next steps.

Ministers expressed significant concern about the impact of the new U.S. farm bill on Canadian farmers, and pledged to continue to pursue means to challenge and counter its effects on marketing of Canadian agriculture products.

Since last June, the federal, provincial and territorial governments have been working with industry stakeholders to develop a policy framework to build a more profitable sector by ensuring Canada is the world leader in meeting consumer demands both at home and internationally. Industry partners are fully engaged in the development of the framework which has five key elements:

1. business risk management;
2. food safety and quality;
3. environment;
4. sector renewal;
5. science and innovation.

In the December federal budget, the Government of Canada committed to providing its share of the predictable and long-term funding needed to support a new, integrated and financially sustainable architecture for agricultural policy for the 21st century.

Given the major role of trade in Canadian agriculture, Ministers agreed on the importance of further developing a strategy under the Agricultural Policy Framework that would increase opportunities for Canadian products in international markets. Ministers agreed a key to 21st century success will be Canada's ability to further earn and nurture world recognition of the superiority of its agricultural and agri-food products in terms of food safety, quality and innovation.

Canada's agriculture and agri-food sector is a key contributor to the high quality of life enjoyed by citizens across the country. The agriculture and agri-food sector accounts for some eight percent of Canadian gross domestic product, and accounting for one in seven jobs nation-wide.

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